

CBS NEWS - FACE THE NATION (3-14-1976)

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From Sunday, March 14th, 1976 Former Georgia Governor, 1976 Democratic Presidential Candidate Jimmy Carter appears on CBS NEWS Face The Nation.

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governor carter a cbs and new york times poll has found that liberal voters seem to think that you are a liberal candidate conservative voters think you're a conservative candidate and moderate voters think you're a moderate candidate the numbers are pretty hard on that does that indicate to you that you have perhaps campaigned as a sort of a wishy-washy candidate being all things to all people not taking any particular position yourself no i take specific positions i think what it indicates is that people don't like to be put in boxes you know what used to be a straight liberal attitude in a very ideological way and what used to be conservative attitudes are now very much clouded in the public's mind for instance i've had very strong support from blacks i've had very strong support from tough businessmen who want to see the government run properly and in between good support from a wide range of supporters both in new hampshire florida and also in maine and vermont and iowa and i don't think that the voters are in doubt about what i say they just feel that i'm the kind of person that they can trust and if they are liberal i think i'm compatible with their views if i if they are moderate the same and if they voted as conservative i think they still feel that i'm a good president so i think this is a kind of image that's a good one it's based on compatibility with voters not because they've put me in little boxes as a certain sort of ideologically committed person from cbs news washington spontaneous and unrehearsed news interview on face the nation with former governor of georgia jimmy carter a candidate for the democratic presidential nomination governor carter will be questioned by cbs news correspondent ed rabel syndicated columnist for the chicago sun times robert novak and cbs news correspondent george herman

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and cbs news correspondent george herman face the nation is produced by cbs news which is solely responsible for the selection of today's guest and panel ibm is pleased to sponsor these face the nation broadcasts which give you the viewer an opportunity to hear and evaluate varied opinions on the issues of the day what shall i do with my life we all face the question but for three million students graduating from high school each year it is awesome and immediate it's many mixed emotions and a time where you think if what you're doing is going to be the right thing for the future you've got a whole life ahead of yourself so you better sit down now and think it out and try to think about what you want to do for thousands of students across the country today like these at proviso high school near chicago there's now a better way to find out about occupational choices in colleges with the help of a guidance counselor an ibm computer and a remarkable computer program called service your choice puzzles me somewhat i've compared it with your high school record and the two don't seem to match the best way to clear up this problem would be to see your counselor so what what is this telling you that um i should have further education students can type questions into the ibm computer and the service program gives back information on thousands of career alternatives developed by high school counselors sivils also poses questions to help students find out more about their own interests and explore the immense amounts of information in the computer as students find out more they are able to imagine more alternative futures for themselves oh i would mind being a forest ranger for a stranger yeah well i didn't know this had so much in it i mean wow it's

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i mean wow it's sevis students and counselors are using civis in more than 150 schools here and abroad helping open up new perspectives toward a future that may be a little easier to look forward to ibm helping people find the answers [Music] governor carter you say that you think liberals consider consider you a liberal and moderates and moderate and so forth because of the blurring of the labels and the categories and you say you have taken issues stands on the issues yet some of the stands you've taken on the issue seemed some critics to be a little bit blurry for example the right to work law the repeal of the right to work law is certainly not the most important issue in the country nevertheless you've said that you will sign such a repeal if it should be passed and you're also on record as opposing such a repeal well when i was running for governor of georgia i told the labor leaders and also the public that if the georgia legislature repealed the right to work laws that i would be glad to send it into law that was when my responsibilities were to georgia at that time i did not favor a repeal of 14b which is a national law now that i approach the presidency as a potential president i've taken the same position which i think is fairly consistent although there's some inconsistency i admit but i want everybody to understand that if the congress passes a repeal of 14b that i'll be glad to sign it into law governor in line with this question of and indeterminate positions you have said constantly on your campaign that you're in favor of national comprehensive mandatory health insurance but you don't tell how it would be financed how much it would cost and whether it would be under private or public auspices you prepared to say that today or do you think the public don't doesn't need to know your answers to that question well i don't know the

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that question well i don't know the answer yet the two phases of a national comprehensive mandatory health insurance program that i'd like to reserve a right to decide later on when i have more time to study i would presume that before the general election is or if i am the nominee that i'd spell it out specifically but i would like to reserve the right to include the private sector say blue cross and blue shield as a co-partner with the federal government in the administration of a national health insurance program and as far as the exact percentages that would be derived from general funds employees and employer contributions that's another subject that i don't yet know about my exact standard but i think that's not very important to the voters what they want to know is are we going to have a national comprehensive mandatory health insurance program i'm committed to that and will work hard as president to get it implemented governor the centerpiece of your campaign has been reorganization as it was in georgia and you say you don't want anybody to vote for you this year who doesn't want to see the federal government reorganized you talk about 1900 agencies being reorganized to 200 and yet you really aren't willing to say which agencies are going to be eliminated what's going to happen to certain agencies why can't you tell tell us now what's going to happen well there's no way for me to envision at this point as a full-time candidate which particular agencies in the federal government would survive three years after i'm in the white house it took me a full year just to study georgia's government when we had 300 agencies to start with we abolished 278 of them through consolidation or complete elimination we now have about 1900 perhaps more in the federal government and i intend to cut those down to no more than 200. it's a goal i've set for myself that i think is achievable well can the voters really make a judgment on you if if you cannot tell them specifically what you're going to do now well whether or not they can they'll have to because there's no way that i can take off from campaigning do a complete and definitive study of

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do a complete and definitive study of what the federal government is and what it's going to be three or four years in the future even if i was in the white house now governor i had full programs i couldn't do it but let me give you one other point we now have 72 agents who's responsible for health i can't say which of those seven and two might survive but we certainly don't need that many i would say two would be a gracious plenty we have 42 responsible for education which one to those should survive i can't say but i certainly know that we don't need 42 is responsible for education governor i'll give you a question you don't have to

take off from campaigning to answer and that is that in your no matter how many agencies you uh eliminated in georgia the payroll in your four years of governor increased about 24 in the state right now in the federal government would you reduce the federal payroll and if so by how much forgetting about how many agencies you eliminate i can't say that i would we uh reduced administrative costs tremendously in georgia and shifted the saved money into better services for our people this uh resulted in a drastic reduction in the growth of the state payroll the last year i was in office the payroll increased about 2.4 percent and i can certainly guarantee that administrative costs in the federal government would reduce be reduced drastically compared to total costs a lot of people have the idea that you would decrease the number of federal bureaucrats actually you would keep about the same number or more on is that correct i can't say it'd be exactly the same or more but the portion of the federal budget that goes to administrative costs will be cut substantially we did it in georgia there's no doubt in my mind it can be done in the federal government but you did increase the payroll total yes but this was this was in mental health centers better prison reform more uh teachers better alcoholism treatment centers and so forth out of uh desk jobs administrative jobs into service jobs yes that did occur let's talk about campaigning for a moment since you bring that up what are your campaign plans what is your strategy for the next next period well i'm immediately looking at the next four states which is uh chicago illinois areas

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chicago illinois areas tuesday and then north carolina a week from tuesday and then the following week kansas and virginia that's the next four states encompassing about 325 delegates and in the following two states the fifth and sixth ones will be in new york and wisconsin on the 6th of april which has about the same number of delegates about 340. how do you think you'll do in illinois i think i'll do well i've got two tough opponents well maybe three tough ones george wallace is making all-out effort in illinois so sergeant shriver who formerly lived and worked in illinois as you know plus fred harris who has some very fervent supporters then north carolina would be another showdown vote let me stop at illinois for a moment i hate to get into this numbers game but perhaps we should have some idea right now what you think you need to do in illinois well i would like to come in first in the preferential primary that's what i would need to do to be pleased and we're challenging 84 delegates in illinois i would like very much to get at least a fourth of those and show to the other uncommitted delegates are those who are committed to the so-called stephenson slate which is controlled to substantial degree by mayor daley or the walker slate which is for the governor that i do have strong support in illinois i think it would help me later on when the time comes for those voters to make the delegates to make a finalist decision if i can do well in that district and say look i carried the votes of your own people back home therefore you ought to support me in the convention it would help a lot so i'd say at least a fourth of a challenged delegates plus to win the uh primary governor you really need sooner or later you are going to need the votes and the delegates of the big industrial northern states are you not or can you write those off no i'm not writing off anything no but do you need them do you really apply for them are they an important part of your strategy yes it is and of course illinois is the first time that i'm already going all out to win delegates and votes but i might point out that uh that's kind of an idle exercise because in the 13 southern states which for instance are being written off

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which for instance are being written off completely by senator jackson there are about the same number of votes as exist in michigan plus pennsylvania plus ohio plus new york 678 delegates i believe so and that's about the same as the top four states in the east well now i think that's good i'm sorry how about those four states new york pennsylvania michigan and ohio with their 737 delegates well we're going to do as well as we can in all four other states i've entered all of them yeah but the point is that my opponents are just writing off a total region of the country can you win and will you win a a substantial portion of those 737 northern industrial state delegates i believe so yes sir we've got good strong support in ohio well organized there and in pennsylvania we'll do well in michigan you know in new york this is a very difficult state because it's still fairly well controlled by the political bosses of new york we just recently this week got the legislature and i was attempting to to put my name on the ballot at all and now my opponents particularly senator jackson is

challenging on technicalities my right to have delegates in the different districts but we'll do the best we can under those adverse circumstances governor when you were ever asked on the campaign trail about uh foreign policy i've noticed that you always make criticism and get a great deal of applause for it that one of the things wrong with our foreign policy is that whenever you walk into an embassy and see quote a fat bloated ignorant rich major contributor to nixon who can't even speak the language of the country in which he serves you think that's part of our what's wrong with our foreign policy governor can you name one such uh a fat ignorant bloated ambassador who can't speak the language no i would want to name any well you can you name one though you make the accusation all over there are only four ambassadors governor who gave contributions to uh mr nixon are any of them fit that category well i wouldn't want to name names but the point that i make is and i don't do it every time i make a foreign policy

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do it every time i make a foreign policy every now and then i do but not often when i've been in foreign countries oh and go into the embassies it's obvious from talking to the people in the countries and talking to the ambassadors that they are not qualified to be diplomats for this country they are appointed as a political payoff but there are what i make is that whether they are actually fat or thin that they are appointed because they are political in a relationships and not because of quality now in the la the last time i was in europe for instance out of 33 ambassadors who served in the whole european theater only three of them were professional diplomats the others were appointed for political reasons governor you your credibility has been challenged by your critics and by some people in the press and there's only four people who are now serving as ambassadors who gave money to nixon uh three of them know the language of the country that they work in and one of them uh is taking language training isn't that bordering on demagoguery when you make a flat statement about these kind of fat bloated ignorant ambassadors i don't believe so i think it illustrates the point very clearly and when you say presently serving i presume that you're not including those that have served in the last three or four years you're talking about the present foreign policy i was talking about the countries where i visited in the last four years while i was governor and since then i don't know exactly who the ambassadors are now i haven't visited foreign countries in recent months are you going to contact japan are you going to continue to use that formulation and get uh pause from it i may or may not governor there's something else you do on the campaign trail that uh in front of some audiences you tick off the names of great americans like thomas jefferson abraham lincoln martin luther king jr and i've noticed though and in front of some all-white audiences you omit the name of martin luther king now do you do that intentionally or have you just forgotten his name no as a matter of fact when you and some of the other news men asked me that on a plane the other day i it had not been a deliberate thing what i ordinarily do is if the audience does have black people in it always include martin luther king jr's name

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include martin luther king jr's name even if there's only three or four black people in the whole audience but since that was pointed out to me i have very carefully always included dr martin luther king jr's name and then we'll continue to do it had you did you do it intentionally before no it wasn't except that i always intentionally put martin luther king jr's name in if there are black people in the audience because he was a great american why'd you leave it out when they were all white well it was not a deliberate thing and it won't be done anymore but uh it was just a reaction to the audience and what they would uh you know and the ladies in which they would be interested governor i gather that senator jackson irritated you a little bit during the course of the massachusetts primary and you said i believe while you're in florida that senator jackson exploited an issue that has racist connotations and you said i don't want to win that kind of a race now checking back through the files i find that famous ap dispatch of 1972 february which quotes you as saying that you would support in your own state a statewide boycott of schools only if the general assembly fails to pass a resolution calling for a constitutional amendment prohibiting busing and that then you might support the boycott of schools as a last resort isn't that a kind of a campaign or not a campaign but a statement with racist connotations i think not at that time of course i was not a candidate i was governor and i was faced with a massive effort supported by many political figures in georgia to mount an all-out boycott against

our public school system because of the threat of busing in augusta as an alternative to the boycott and in order to hold down racial attention in the state i said that the better way to handle it was to let the legislature pass a simple non-binding resolution calling on the congress to address the issue through a constitutional amendment rather than having all of our kids leave the schools all over georgia the impact of my statement was was to defuse racial tension and i don't think it was designed to prey on the divisive and emotional and racist

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the divisive and emotional and racist uh attitudes that did exist in a few of our people if you were elected president how do you think you would be able to exert some leadership on the question of schools and integration well i think you have some ideas some formulas for achieving certain kinds of integration without that one way is that i could use my own family and my own background as an example i think that the passage of the civil rights act was the best thing that ever happened to the south in my lifetime the integration of our schools has not been a step backward for us it's been a step forward i think we've made a lot of progress in the south and i think most southerners are very proud of it i'm not in favor of mandatory busing we tried it in the south and it didn't work the only kids that ever got busted the poor children i've never seen a rich child bust so we worked out in atlanta a busing system that is my favorite and i would emphasize this but i've also made it clear that as president i would be sworn to uphold the law and if federal courts ruled contrary to my own personal uh desire that i would support the federal court also i do not favor a constitutional amendment to to prohibit busing it would be a very divisive thing this is the second time this kind of issue has come up in this in this program and this broadcast and i it disturbs me a little bit because i keep hearing you saying that you would follow rather than that you would lead if such and such a law were passed you would sign it doesn't uh in your theory doesn't the president have some ability and some obligation to lead and to try to get things done himself rather than simply signing things that come to him i certainly do and and to provide equality of opportunity for black people and other minority groups in the schools would be a very very important responsibility of mine as president i think i met that responsibility very clearly in georgia as a matter of fact if there's one uniform base of support that i've demonstrated in all the primaries so far it is support of black people who have seen what i have done in georgia as governor and i would maintain the same posture toward black people as uh

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posture toward black people as uh as president governor uh but i still would have to say that i can't mislead the people by saying that i would undo supreme court rulings or if a court ruled contrary to my own beliefs that i would try to fight against the court i would support the court rulings even if it did disagree with what i basically believe is best governor you tend to have it both ways on both bussing and abortion by saying you were opposed to force bussing and you were opposed to abortion but you would not attempt to amend the constitution on either issue is that because you do think you would fail to amend the constitution or do you have some philosophical complaint against any further amendments to the constitution i don't have any philosophical law uh commitments that would be overriding but we for 15 or 20 years in the south have dealt with a race issue it was very divisive for us very difficult question for us to face we faced it well and there was a lot of bloodshed a lot of heartache but i would not favor trying to prohibit busing in the state in the states of the country by passing a constitutional amendment it would just reopen old wounds and old source and have every legislature bogged down in debating back and forth whether or not to try to prevent busing with a constitutional amendment i think that's the wrong way to go about it we have successfully overcome that problem and i think the boston and other places now of 10 15 years behind the south i think eventually they'll come basically to the atlanta plan which says voluntary busing is okay but the blacks have to be adequately represented in running the school system that's my preference and i don't favor a constitutional amendment on that side i just brought up the abortion issue and you say on the campaign stump that some people think that abortion is murder do you that's a hard question for me to answer i i

have a deep feeling that abortion is wrong at what stage in the development of the fetus it becomes murder i can't say but uh but i wish that there were never any abortions it really bothers me about it the supreme court has ruled

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it the supreme court has ruled that the first 13 weeks the mother and the doctor have a right to have an abortion i wish that there was no abortions but i i can't say at what point the abortion becomes murder governor many liberals who supported you through the florida primary supported you because you felt you could defeat george wallace and you did defeat him there are now having second thoughts about the continuing their support do you need them now to win the democratic nomination the liberals well as a matter of fact i don't agree with your premise i have seen a shift of many of the several of the liberals who were holding back toward me since the massachusetts primary i think my liberal strength has been increasing since massachusetts and i believe that after florida will it will continue yes i do need them very badly and would like to have them some of the leading liberal uh political activists particularly in in washington have never known me and i've never had a chance to know them and they've been very reluctant to support me but they are fine people and i would like very much to have their support yes governor this brings up perhaps the most unpleasant question i have to ask you and that is one of sort of sectarian sectional rivalry there's been a lot of talk that some people in the south believe that liberals in the north are rejecting you because you are a southerner and i detect a good deal of anger in the south at the idea that northerners cannot support you because you are a southerner do you feel that way do you feel that northerners have some anti-southern bigotry or prejudice about you just a few i haven't uh suffered because i'm a southerner political speaker i don't believe so i did very well in maine very well in vermont very well in new hampshire in fact out of the first four new england primaries i've carried three of them first place there is still some difficulty in my convincing some northern liberals that a southerner can be a good

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liberals that a southerner can be a good honest decent non-biased president are you implying that this prejudice that you encounter is among northern liberals that's right what there is of it but i want to hasten to say that i don't consider it to be a major factor i think this is a tiny majority i mean a tiny minority and uh it doesn't concern me because of the results of the election so far but i wish it didn't exist at all and i believe that the fear of me because i am from the south is dissipating rapidly governor when you were ever asked about your desire to cut the defense budget seven or eight billion dollars you always mention how many generals or admirals there are do you know on either in percentages or flat amounts what the cost of the salaries of the of the generals and admirals is no i don't it's four tenths of one percent four one hundredths of one percent and forty one million dollars do you don't you think that also borders on exaggeration and making that a major issue no it doesn't because the actual number of admirals and generals is mirrored all the way down to the ranks we have too much of an overload of bureaucracy in the uh in the defense department as i said many times we have more admirals and generals than we had when we had 11 million americans in uniform at the end of the second world war and when you have an admiral you've got an awful lot of people under him who are almost admirals we've got an admiral now for 1.7 ships we've got eight captains for every ship this flow of statistics and thank you very much governor carter for being with us on face the nation

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